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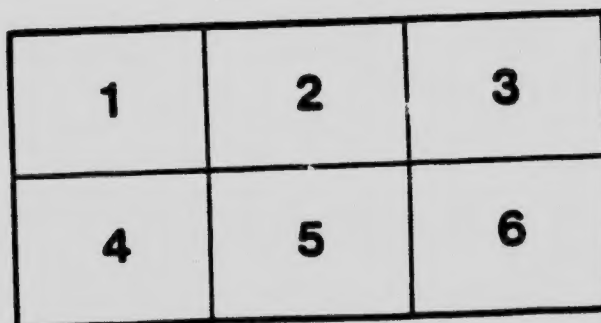
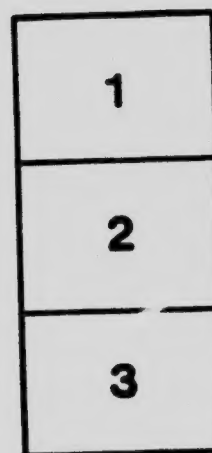
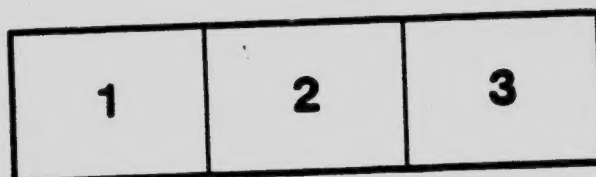
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1916(?)

GOVERNMENT LABOUR BUREAUX

Their Scope and Aims

PRESENT SYSTEM INADEQUATE

Though many will tell you that times are bad, there are now, as always, a certain number of Employers looking for workers, and men out of Employment seeking work. What can be simpler than to bring them together? Yet, for the most part, the process in Canada is carried on in a bungling manner. Take for instance the case of a big manufacturer employing highly skilled work-people. Requiring a workman, he naturally wishes the best man procurable. The best man available may be sitting out of doors reading the "Ads" column of the daily paper, in the hope of finding a position, or with the same object in view, tramping round to the commercial employment Agencies. Another worker, not the most efficient available, gets ahead of the best man, to the mutual loss of both Employer and the most desirable employee. There are at present in Canada four ways of bringing the man and the job together — newspapers, commercial employment agencies, charitable organizations and chance. All are inadequate.

What is wrong with the brains of the Nation that the Labour Market is unorganized resulting in idleness and distress? What is the matter with the State administration that no trustworthy centres are provided where the Labourer may apply for Employment? And what is at fault with the thousands yearly given in

Charity? The truth of the matter is that in this age with all its talk of efficiency, economy and business management, one of the most vital elements in production is ignored; there is no organization of the Labour Market. We find honest, intelligent men and women giving way to apathy and despair in the constantly recurring struggle hunting jobs, and we see children new to the game of finding work thrown on their own resources to make connection with frequently disastrous results to their after lives.

NO VALUABLE STATISTICS

We have no standing records of the Labour Market, and no place to obtain them; our statistics are largely made up on the basis of volunteer reports from Unions and charitable Societies; we know little of the amount of casual labour and seasonal work, the amount of wage earning time, of idleness and of its effect upon the worker; and we know practically nothing of how trades are dovetailed into each other or how workmen carry over the dull seasons. In large cities a long reserve list of casual workers is carried, with little knowledge or concern about what happens to them when there are no temporary jobs to fill. Irregularity in work breeds irregularity in workers.. From an extreme casualization of the labourer, it is but a step to sloth, dependency, apathy, all of which smash character, debauch morals and destroy ambition. The Government spends money in informing manufacturers with regard to markets for their articles, but does not provide the individual worker with the same kind of information. What is this but a wholesale manufacture of distrust of State and Law, the killing of the habit of Industry and incitement to the most extreme forms of Socialism and anarchy?

LABOUR MARKET MUST BE ORGANIZED

As a first step the Labour market should be organized along modern lines, and common sense must do away with the stupid fact of idle men and unfilled or misfilled jobs. What is needed is a great National Employment Exchange, a Federal Labour Bureaux system that will centralize all the powers and activities of Federal, State and Municipal Bodies, serving as a clearing-

house for Employers seeking Workers and Labour seeking Employment, not the collection of rumour, or the spreading of optimistic reports, but the accurate information which tells a worker what the job is, where it is, what it pays and how to get to it. What information can be more important to a Nation than to furnish its citizens with knowledge as to opportunities for honest industry? It is the same sort of information that the Government distributes through its consular reports, geological surveys and publications on the Natural resources of the country.

Further, the Bodies concerned must recognize their responsibility for Unemployment, and regard Work as a Social obligation, which has to be provided in order that both individual and State may reap the benefit of constant regular productivity.

Any city which attempts to solve the Unemployment problem and organize the Labour Market will find itself confronted by these three facts:

FIRST.—that Unemployment and conditions of Industry are not merely municipal problems but involve the larger units of the Province and Nation; therefore the base of operation should be wide enough to recognize this.

SECOND.—that the Problem has for so long been nobody's business and left in the hands of commercial employment agencies and chance; that time must elapse before clean, wholesome conditions will prevail with a healthier spirit of confidence between Employers and Workers.

THIRD.—that the problem of Unemployables (vagrants, dependents, defectives and inefficient) should be treated as a problem of regeneration without any hesitation or compromise, the problem of the Employables as an Industrial matter.

The question of the way in which the youth of the Nation finds work can now no longer be ignored. Equitable treatment and proper safeguards of the ever increasing army of Women Workers can no longer be shelved.

HANDLING OF IMMIGRANTS DEMANDS INTELLIGENCE

The handling and distribution of the newly arrived Immigrant demands a sane consistent program of operation, if the morale and productive power of the Nation is to be sustained.

All these problems are so continuously inter-Provincial in their character that they cannot be adjusted by any individual Provincial Government, as its jurisdiction does not extend beyond its own borders.

The Immigration policy of the country is shaped and controlled by Federal Authorities. They stimulate and bonus. The shaping of the destinies, the distribution of the fresh human resources introduced, and the application of their dynamic forces is a gigantic responsibility resting on the Federal Government, in coordination with the Provincial and Municipal Authorities.

WHERE NATIONAL LABOUR BUREAUX ALREADY EXIST

Government Labour Exchange systems have been in existence since 1865 and are now found in Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand, France, Belgium, Spain, Scandinavia, the Argentine Republic, Germany and Austria. The New Zealand system has existed for 24 years and proved its worth, not only in dealing with domestic Labour conditions, but in relation to Immigration in affording accurate information to Immigrants and in distributing them on arrival.

Great Britain with her network of 430 Labour Exchanges covering the whole country has, through statistics recorded, proved the worth of the system, and its increasing facilities in dealing with future problems, when the Empire will be girdled with a chain of Labour Exchanges playing the leading part in the distribution of population and Labour throughout the Empire. The following brief figures give us some idea of progress:

In 1910 Great Britain had 82 public Exchanges, which by July 1913 had grown to 430. In 1912 2,432,213 applications for work and 1,286,205 applications for workers were received, a total of 1,051,661 positions filled or 77 per cent. of all notified; 96 per cent. of all the workers were found to have repaid fares advanced by Government, to enable them to reach their jobs.

France has over 162 Exchanges established since 1910; and Germany (before the war) had 323 Exchanges—in 1911, 1,055,784 positions were filled.

INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS SAYS LABOUR BUREAUX INDISPENSABLE

At the International Congress for Combatting Unemployment held at Ghent, Belgium, in 1913, at which 23 countries and 158 cities, many of the Educational, Philanthropic and Labour Bodies, and all the Churches and Socialists of the world were represented, after two weeks discussion, a unanimous decision was arrived at that Government Labour Exchanges are an indispensable factor in State administration.

CANADA HAS NO ORGANIZATION

What reliable Nation-wide organization does Canada possess to deal with the following gigantic problems at the close of the War?—

The replacing of returned troops in suitable occupation.—

The readjustment of dislocated Industrial conditions and the transference of workers from War industries to normal Industrial occupations.—

The Industrial training and technical equipment of potential citizens to meet the strenuous and fierce competition for Industrial and commercial expansion.—

The handling of the stream of Immigration which will set in when Peace is concluded.—

The replacing of interned aliens from concentration camps throughout the country.

NO MACHINERY EXISTS

The Memorial of the Deputation of Western and Southern Mayors to the Federal Government in May 1915, testifies to the evil results of lack of organization in dealing with the distribution of Labour and the placing of the newly arrived Immigrant; in permitting the newly arrived country bred man to flock into the congested cities and become a consumer, instead of giving facilities for establishment in rural districts to become a producer. Stress is laid on the importance of more attention to permanent settlement, less on building of railways and large cities.

THE CLOSE OF THE WAR

The confusion and Economic waste of the past will be intensified tenfold at the close of the War, when thousands of soldiers return, when Factories cease their war equipment, and the whole fabric of Trade and Industry has to be reconstructed without a large reserve of wealth to facilitate the process. The victory will be to that Nation or group of Nations which devote all their energy and resources to Industrial training and organisation. All the component parts of the British Empire will share in the struggle. All must participate in the training.

In "The Effect of War on Industry", Mr. W. L. Layton of the British Board of Trade Dept. draws attention to these conditions as follows:—

"Whatever the future demand for Industrial products may be the task of replacing millions of men in civilian employment will be one requiring great care and forethought. Many Employers have undertaken to keep places open but in view of the transferences referred to it will be merely shifting the incidence of Unemployment if the returning soldiers are put back and other men thrown out on the street. Moreover a very large proportion of men have no specific promise on which they can rely. Clearly it is far easier to throw the Industrial machine out of gear than to put it back in order again. Finally, history affords no precedent as to the immediate industrial aftermath of the War, but the destruction of wealth, the dislocation of Markets, have been so general and on so large a scale that it is rash to assume on historical analogies, which are really inapplicable to the present situation, that trade will quickly be able to resume its normal conditions or that spending power in the form of either commerce or credit will at once be available for those who will have urgent need of material goods. Hence, the re-absorption of European Armies together with the re-transference of those work-people who have been diverted to many occupations to produce guns and war equipment generally may be slow in process and will present our own, as well as European Governments with a problem in organization which will tax their utmost capacity".

TAKE CARE OF THE CHILD

What sustained coordinated effort is made throughout the Dominion to ascertain the abilities and natural bent of the child, to fit for occupation before leaving school? What organization exists to which the School can hand the child in the confident belief that a suitable opening, safeguarded against exploitation can be found for the boy or girl? What knowledge do parents secure as to conditions of trades and occupations, rates of pay, training necessary to give the child a fair start in the Industrial World?

The only National organization which can grapple with these manifold complex problems by coordinating the energies and efforts of Federal, Provincial and Municipal Authorities, Employers and Workers, is a Federal Labour Bureaux system, non political in character, staffed by efficient officials regarding their work as a life long vocation. The support already given from Prince Rupert to Halifax, by Provincial Premiers, Municipalities, Business, National and Labour organisations is a sufficiently strong proof of the awakening of the public responsibility and consciousness. The failure of the Minister of Labour to make good the official pledge of immediate legislation given to the Deputation at Parliament Building on May 18th 1914, is an indication of how far the Government is isolated from the real sentiment and crying necessities of the Nation.

E. ST. JOHN WILEMAN.

COMMENTS BY PROMINENT MEN

"To relieve is to wait until the evil has befallen, to attempt to repair it. To relieve is to wait until misery has come, to give alms to the miserable. But alms remains at best a meritorious deed — not a social act."

LEON BOURGEOIS, Ex-President of the Council of Ministers, France. *Président Ass. on Unemployment*."

"There is, as the Board of Trade from accurate statistics of the past decade is positively able to testify, no month in the year in which some great industry is not at its very slackest, and equally no month in the year in which some great industry is not at its busiest... By what steps can we proceed to such a regularisation of these seasonal trades and such a dovetailing of their unspecialised and unskilled labour as would prevent the recurrent fluctuations of Employment to which they are now subject.

SYDNEY WEBB."

"And yet it (Canada) is reproducing in an intensified form some of the troubles of the Old World. I have never seen in Great Britain such an acute Unemployment Problem as has been forced upon my attention during the last three months in Canada.

G. N. BARNES, M.P., Head of Munitions Workers,
Commissions Statement to London Daily News."

"They are an instrument in the process of being perfected, rather than one in full use, yet no one can doubt they have come to stay and to grow as the many services they may render come to be more fully recognized... it is very generally realized that to put on the individual workman the whole burden of finding and following the ever shifting market for his labour, is to leave to isolated action a matter that cries out for organization, and that in regard to every other commodity in the world has obtained full measure of organization. Everything that is bought and sold has its known marts. Labour alone is still blindly hawked from door to door and town to town. The isolated search for work, it is argued, is demoralising to the individual as well as economically wasteful..."

"There will be a far better choice, the best men at any moment available will all be found concentrated at the Labour Exchange.

W. D. BEVERIDGE, *Unemployment.*"

"The Mayor of Winnipeg said: 'The basic cause of the present conditions was undoubtedly the fact that for years Canada has been building

Railways and cities at an alarming rate on borrowed capital. The Problem is not for the cities alone to settle, but a National one... Municipalities cannot go on building sewers, etc., for ever. Present conditions are not due to the War alone, they would probably have been worse had the War not come.

Deputation of Mayors to Federal Government, May 24th 1915."

"If some system were adopted, whereby not only between the Municipalities, but also possibly to some extent by the Provincial Governments, there could be help in arranging to give men the information necessary to bring the Employer and Employed into better communication with one another, it would very materially assist in the solution of the problem. The Dominion Government is really the right Authority to take up this matter and deal with it. If it is taken hold of by the Dominion Government the danger of overlapping would be very materially done away with, and a lot of unnecessary work would be avoided."

Senator BOSTOCK, Senate Debate, March 10th., 1915."

"There is no question that an organized system of Labour Bureaux from the Atlantic to the Pacific if well directed, from the Head office, would allow of the placing of a number of men where they would be better able to earn a living than in a congested city.

Senator DANDURAND, Evidence before Senate Labour Committee, May 6th, 1914."

"There is no Department of the Government which could be more beneficial in its results as the successful establishment and proper management of public Employment Bureaux in coordination with the Federal Government. Their establishment and proper management would in my judgement, do much in normal times to reduce the number of idle shiftless intemperate immoral and criminal; it would make for a better citizenship and a respect for our laws and civic institutions.

W. L. SEARS, Supt. N. Y. City Public Employment Bureau."

"I consider that they are absolutely essential to any system of Labour organization, and if properly worked they will be a great help and in no way harm the interests of trade unions... As a personal opinion I think it is very desirable that such agencies should be set up as soon as possible in Canada. When I was in Canada last year I was amazed to see the private Labour Bureaux and it was quite clear to me that a Government system was a very urgent need. The state of Industrial affairs in this country and in the Colonies after the War will make it even more necessary. If you had Government Labour Exchanges then there might be arrangements made between them and our system to the mutual advantage of both sides.

Letter of PHILIP SNOWDON, M.P., Oct., 27th, 1915."

"I want to say that I agree in general terms with what Miss Wileman has said in respect to the establishment of Labour Bureaux. We always make the reservation that the Labour Bureaux will under no circumstances be used as a means to interfere when there is any Industrial trouble at all, that they must keep aloof from that, that they cannot be used to bring pressure to break a strike or lockout. In a general way we are in sympathy with the statement made by Miss Wileman.

J. WATTERS, Dominion Trades & Labour Congress President.
Senate Labour Committee Evidence."

"More good men have been turned into embittered advocates of social revolution by unemployment than by any other single cause.

Prof. H. SEAGER, Pres. Am. Assoc. for Labour Legislation."

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

A system of Labour Exchanges has been in operation in Britain some years — according to general report it has proved an admirable medium for performing that great public service known as "bringing the man and the job together". It is scarcely necessary to emphasize the benefits that would accrue to the country from an organization that would be in close touch with the surpluses and the shortages in all Labour markets and could so arrange matters as to dovetail one into the other.

The Evening News of Montreal, Oct., 28th, 1915.

It is a curious anomaly in these days of efficient selling that the most indispensable commodity in the world that is to say Labour, is still marketed—hawked about as it were from door to door, with little or no regard for the law of supply and demand, and with small attempt at cooperation between buyer and seller. To better this condition of affairs to bring the man who has Labour to sell into touch with the man who wants to buy Labour, there have been established in many countries what are known as free Labour Bureaux. The work which these Labour clearing-houses could do throughout Canada more particularly at a time like this, should be invaluable.

Montreal Daily Star, Aug., 11th, 1915.

Sir John Willison stated that the Municipal Labour Bureaux while good will do no permanent good, neither would Provincial Bureaux, but there should be a National system.

Meeting Union of Ontario Municipalities.

The Globe, Sept., 2nd, 1915.

Canada is far behind most industrial countries in this respect. Even Spain the land of to-morrow has awakened to the necessity of providing a clearing-house for Labour... The condition of the Unemployed workman is even more serious than in England because of the great extent of the country and the long distance between important centres. Here it is possible to hawk Labour from door to door but only in a limited degree from town to town. This increased handicap upon the Unemployed makes it all the more desirable that the State should provide reliable information through Labour Exchanges as to the openings for employment in various parts of the country and should bring the worker into touch with the Employer who requires his services. Somewhere there are "frills" in the Federal programme that could be cut out to make room for so highly important a necessity as well operated Labour Exchanges.

Toronto Globe, May 13th, 1915.

A NEEDED ORGANIZATION

These Labour Bureaux are doing very admirable work in some other countries, in the way of providing in all large centres of Industry lists both of Employers who want help and of Unemployed people who want jobs. The cost of such an organization would not be large, while the public value would be very great.

Ottawa Evening Journal, May 18th, 1914.

There will be much sympathy in Labour circles with certain features of a proposal now being advocated at Ottawa by Miss Etta St. John Wileman. Her suggestion is that the Federal Government create a Canadian Government system of Labour Bureaux and that a General representative Board be established in London to cooperate with Labour Exchanges throughout the Empire. In elaborating her plan Miss Wileman emphasizes the foolishness of overstocking the Labour Market by means of unchecked indiscriminate immigration.

Sir JOHN WILLISON, Toronto Daily News, Jan., 28th, 1914.

MERCANTILE PRINTING
2 St. Paul Street East
MONTREAL.





